



Houston Bikeway Program

Bikeway News

Fall 2003

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Riding? Be Seen!

One of the most important things to keep in mind when riding your bike is **VISIBILITY**.

Visibility is key to safety on the road or on the trail.

A cyclist can become pencil thin from a motorist's vantage view. If in addition the cyclist is dressed in dark colors and has no lights or reflectors on his bike or apparel, the cyclist becomes practically invisible, particularly at dusk or dawn and especially at night. How can you increase your visibility?

Wear white or bright clothing.

They help other people spot you more easily, day or night. Samples of bright colors are those closest to white like yellow, lime, lemon and aqua. Avoid blacks, blues, reds or browns.

Clothes and apparel with reflective strips are great for low light and dark conditions. Oncoming vehicles can see you when their lights reflect off your gear.

Be Seen...Continued on page 3.



(L to R) Lee Vela, Clear Channel; Adrianna Sanchez; Council Member Bert Keller; Angelica Rodriguez; Contest Winner; Council Member Carol Alvarado; Linda Lykos, YMCA; and F. J. Pyland, Houston Police Officers Union.

Pedestrian Extravaganza

The City of Houston kicked off a pedestrian safety campaign last summer. It included safety presentations, an art contest, a billboard campaign, and recognition of participants to increase pedestrian awareness. The goal was to teach pedestrians to use crosswalks and to teach motorists to respect crosswalks by stopping at the stop line when pedestrians are crossing the street.

Over 300 participants in the YMCA Summer Program received

hands-on pedestrian education from Houston's Bike Patrol Administration. The children applied their experience in the creation of a billboard to help educate

Extravaganza...*Continued on page 3.*

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Rookie Riders

FREE training for rookies at Memorial Park.

If you're starting to cycle and want some pointers to start you off right, you may want to join Charlotte Miller.

A cycling coach for over 12 years and a licensed expert cyclist, Charlotte teaches rookies what it takes to ride and ride well. The course includes bike safety, etiquette and other riding tips for beginners.

The first thing she recommends is to put air in your tires and start riding, so get your bike out and meet her at Memorial Park's picnic loop every Monday—rain or shine—from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Coming Soon!
4:00-6:00pm sessions

Demographics Results

The Houston Bikeway Program completed its informal on-line bikeway survey. The survey was conducted over a 45-day period and 213 responses were received.

Responses indicated that 95% of participants are bike riders with 75% of them being male and 25% female. The 35-44 age range ranked highest with 32% participation. The 25-34 group ranked 25%, and the 45-54 group ranked 20%.

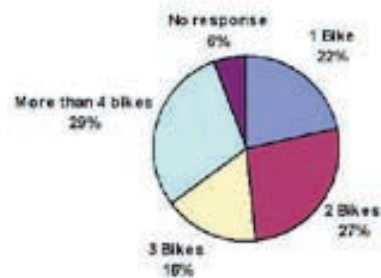
Riders are mostly workers (65%) with 44% in the \$50k-\$100k income bracket and 25% in the above \$100k income range.

Remember

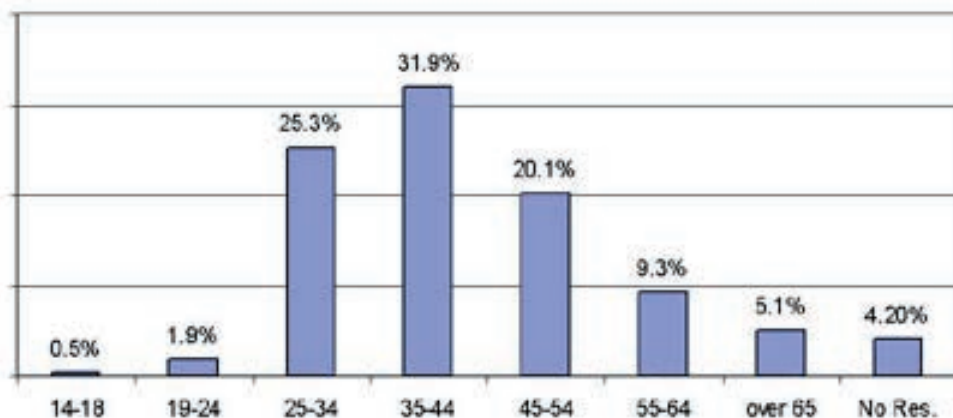
- Get out of the way of those in a hurry.
- Safety
- You are invisible
- Be predictable—show your intentions
- Ride with confidence

--Charlotte Miller

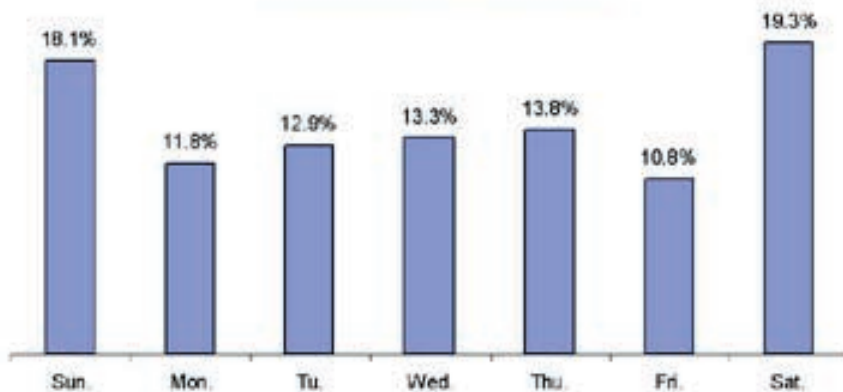
Ownership of Bike



Response by Age Range



Preferred Weekdays to Ride



Bicycle ownership showed that 30% of respondents had four or more bikes with 50% indicating a total cost of over \$1500 for their bicycles.

The preferred day to ride is Saturday and the average rider cycles on three or more days a week for a distance of 20-40 miles per trip.

In regard to safety gear, 84% of respondents always wear a helmet, 51% always wear white or bright clothing, and 51% always use reflectors.

We thank all participants for giving us a picture of Houston bicyclists. For more information, visit www.houstonbikeways.org and click on DEMOGRAPHICS.



Parents, kids, Houston Bike Patrol officers and members of the Explorers - Southeast Division get ready for school with bike and pedestrian safety education at Gulfgate Mall

Be Seen...from page 1

In a pinch, a roll of reflective tape can turn any garment into a safe and visible piece of clothing. The tape can help make your bike more visible too. Be generous with your roll of reflective tape.

Lights are required at night.

Shop around for a good quality headlight that illuminates at a minimum distance of 500 feet. Look for brightness and visibility distance. You want others to be able to see you and you want to be able to see the path ahead of you as well. Rear lights are a plus. They come in a variety of styles. Some flash intermittently. Removable apparel flashers are handy and easy to wear.

Reflectors are a good idea.

Add a pair of reflectors to your tire spokes. Make sure you have a red rear reflector too. A bell or horn can get you noticed by pedestrians.

Never think that because you can see the other vehicle, they have seen you. As a cyclist, staying safe is being a visible rider, day or night.

Extravaganza...from page 1

Houstonians on pedestrian safety. The judges had the difficult task of reviewing all submissions. Council Members Bert Keller and Carol Alvarado gladly volunteered for the difficult job.

They selected a grand prize winner, three runners-up, the best of each YMCA, and five honorable mentions. All winners received prizes.

A Pedestrian Extravaganza (see more on our website), with the use of the Pedestrian Village, was conducted at Gulfgate Mall just before school started. The Pedestrian Village is a miniature town that allows the Houston Bike Patrol Officers and volunteers to teach sidewalk, railroad, and traffic signal safety and heighten awareness of traffic rules by kids and adults



while increasing the use of crosswalks. Children learned proper street crossing and safety tips. Adults learned to respect crosswalks and to watch and yield to pedestrians.

The pedestrian safety campaign made it's official kick-off with the **"Whose Line Is It Anyway?"** billboard campaign. The campaign consisted of one billboard featuring the contest grand prize winner's artwork. The billboard was displayed in the winner's neighborhood. Twenty other billboards displaying the campaign slogan were placed throughout the city along streets including Stella Link, Crawford, Richmond, Mykawa, Pinemont, Bingle and Synott.

The unveiling of the billboards at City Hall included representatives from the YMCA, Clear Channel Outdoor, the Houston Police Officer's Union, Houston Bike Patrol, and campaign co-chairs, Council Members Alvarado and Keller.

The billboards remind motorists that crosswalks are for pedestrians and that they must stop behind the stop line while yielding to anyone crossing the street. The billboards also remind pedestrians to cross the street using designated crosswalks.

For more information on the campaign, visit www.houstonbikeways.org and click **EVENTS**.





Memorial Park Trail along Woodway. Ride to the Houston Arboretum!

Memorial Park Trail Opens

The multi-use trail running along Memorial Park has been completed and is open for use. This trail runs along Woodway in front of the Houston Arboretum, crosses the north side of Memorial Drive at the Picnic Loop and ends at Crestwood where it connects to the existing on-street bikeway network. The trail provides a scenic path for cycling and walking.

The trail segment is part of the Washington Avenue bikeway that brings cyclists to downtown. A west connection will be built at Woodway and Loop 610 to allow cyclists to cross under the Loop. They can then ride north to northwest Houston or south to Uptown Park at N. Post Oak.

Commuter Benefits Winner

The City of Houston received a recognition plaque at the fourth annual Commute Solutions awards event. The award recognizes workplaces possessing outstanding commuter benefits for their employees.

The ceremony was hosted by the Houston-Galveston Area Council to mark the start of Commute Solutions Month. The program encourages employees to try alternatives to driving alone to work.

The City of Houston provides bike racks* at its facilities, a guaranteed ride home for employees who ride the bus, and transit passes for downtown employees who commit to ride mass transit to work.

Ready to Ride

You've learned what you need to do on the road and on the trail. What do you do now? Some riders want to ride with a group. There are several groups you can join. Local bike groups organize rides that give you on-the-road experience in a group environment where you can continue to learn the ropes.

The Houston Bicycle Club is one of the oldest bike clubs in town and one of the largest in the country with almost 1,000 members. They offer rides for the whole family. They regularly schedule rides for every level of expertise. Visit their web site at www.hbc.stevens.com and find out what they have to offer.

If you're into the mud, sweat and cheers of mountain biking, check out the Greater Houston Off-Road Biking Association at www.ghorba.org to find out what is happening in the world of mountain biking. Not only do GHORBA members ride the trails, but they also actively maintain and clean them up through scheduled work parties.

There are other bike groups in town. Visit our web site at www.houstonbikeways.org for links to other organizations or ask your local bike shop for information on a bike club near you.

*** For information on our Bike Parking Program, visit Bike Parking at www.houstonbikeways.org**

City of Houston Bikeway Program

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